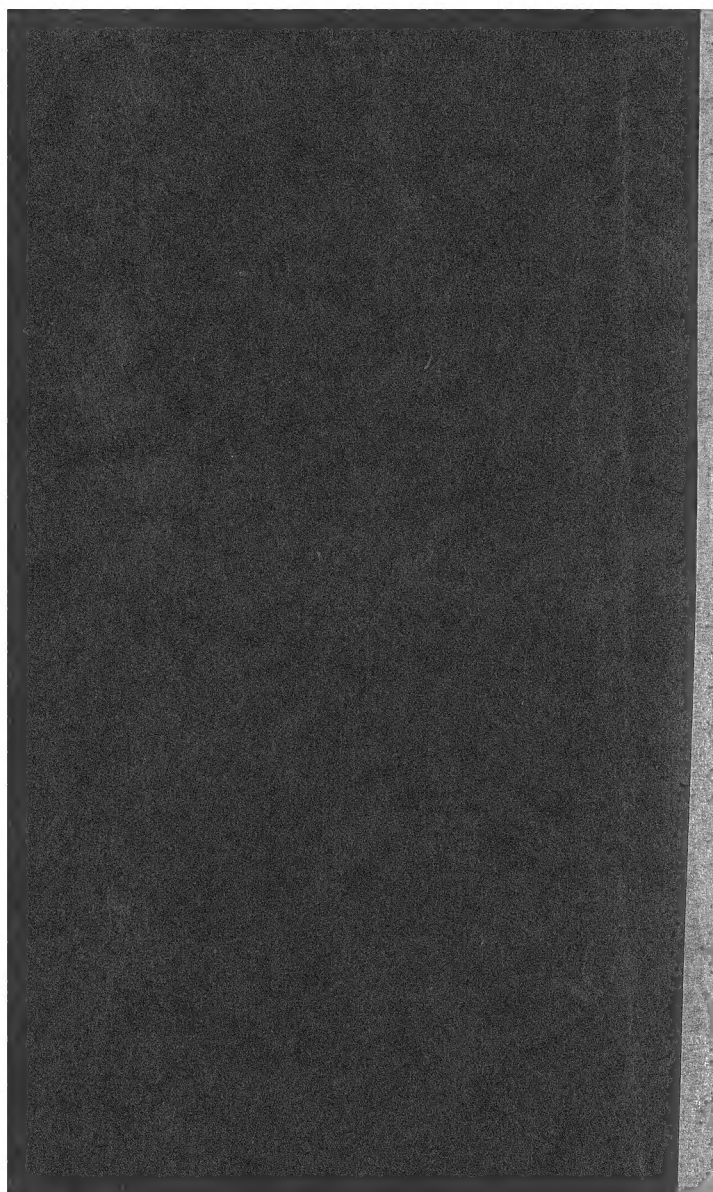


LEAVES of the SYBIL
by
CECIL FRANCIS LLOYD

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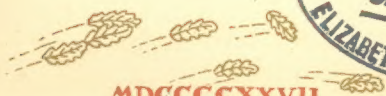
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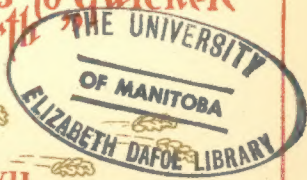
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"Like withered leaves to quicken
a new birth"



MDCCCXXXVII



*To Maud—
My Wife*

*The Sweetest of Women
and the Best of Comrades*



*"I Lov'd Ophelia: Forty Thousand
Brothers Could Not With All
Their Quantity of Love
Make Up My
Sum."*


To Maud

When the dead sun shall fold his burning wings
And earth be but a dream of yesterday,
Sweet as remembered beauty of dead springs,
Clothing the white austerity of May,
Your deathless love's aspiring incense shall
Invest my naked soul with robes angelical.

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O.F.L.



Earthbound

When the great silence comes and, tremblingly,
I leave the confines of this solid land,
Feel the last touch of a warm, earthly hand,
And float upon the viewless ether, free
At last from all earth's shifting pageantry
Beyond the gloom by Death's gray pinions fanned,
I'll see the waves break on a sunlit strand
And hear the murmur of the eternal sea.


O fair may be that sunny land of bliss
Where God the weary soul from evil shields;
Yet, howsoever bright it be, I'll miss
The drift of gray rain o'er the summer fields,
Voices of children, flowers and love's warm kiss
And all the beauty bounteous autumn yields.



Liberty

Often amid the city's savage crush
Where beauty by the mob is trampled down,
Like blossoms fallen from a dancer's gown
At masquerade; I feel the vital hush
Of Alpine valleys, broken by the rush
And roar of distant torrents, see the frown
Of thunder clouds above the Weissshorn's crown,
And catch the plaintive fluting of a thrush.

Oh, Life, capricious as a wandering wind,
Oh, Death, a frost bidding all action cease,
Why do I let you shake the immortal mind?
Why barter freedom for a poor increase
Of glory, power or gold, the mud my kind
Buy with divine estates of health and peace?



The Flower

Envy no twilight glory of dead kings,
Fading on Time's horizon, older far
Are you than earth's decaying kingdoms are,
To which consuming Death's defilement clings.
The most enduring empire can endure
But one brief pulse beat of eternity.
Your beauty veiled the cold austerity
Of the pale coast that first knew oceans lure.
When slowly ebbs down the deserted sand,
Red with the slain sun's blood, the final tide,
Your grace will still rebuke Oblivion's pride,
A moment, ere he blots you from the land.
You are frail beauty's body, given to be
Promise and proof of immortality.

Ruth

Beneath a gnarled old olive's grateful shade,
While glowed the fields under the noontide heat
And the hot south wind bent the bearded wheat,
A maiden tall, in simple garb arrayed
Rested; above her head the branches swayed.
Her pensive, noble face was sadly-sweet:
A scanty sheaf lay at her sandaled feet.
The wind with her rich, ruddy tresses played.

Mother of kings, an exile from thy home,
Too well I know thine eyes were turned to where,
Blue-veiled in air, the hills of Moab lay.
How many Ruths through alien meadows roam,
Or, climbing some dim tenements dusty stair,
Faint for soul-lifting mountains, far away?



The Mistress

Beauty, I've loved you as the saints love God,
 Since first my eyes were opened to the blue
 Of Heaven's divinest azure breaking through
The Tempest's horses, flying, lightning-shod.
Oft do I find you by a trampled clod
 Where few enough would think to look for you;
 A grass blade heavy with a globe of dew,
Through which the shadowed constellations plod.

Yes, I have sought you, Beauty, in strange places,
 And once you gently came unsought to me,
As two small hands brimmed with abundant graces
 Of Life, Death, God and the world to be.
May's beauty each returning May replaces,
 But never more shall I those small hands see.

The Jew as seen by a Gentile

Man wallowed in the slime of brute desire,
Saying, "My appetite is law to me
Until my eyes are dust and no more see
The strange delights that set my blood on fire."
But spake in wrath, Jehovah, "I require
One stubborn race that will not bow the knee
To idols, through the night of time to be
A light to lead men from the fleshy mire."

Then came the Jew, fanatic to the core,
An idol-smasher, filled with righteous rage,
He ground the gods to dust but ope'd a door
Through which man gained a nobler heritage.
An ocean of the spirit, without shore,
On which man finds his God in every age.

Beatrice

Out of a tarnished rondure of dull gold
 A face surveys the thoughtless Roman crowd,
 A young girl's vivid face, warm-hued and proud,
Darkened by something sinister and cold.
It shakes your soul to see a thing so fair
 Marred by that shadow of the devil's wing;
 You wonder what infernal memories cling
About those tender lips, that radiant hair.
But when you catch her glance a sudden chill
 Shocks you, as when on winter nights a gust
 Of wind blows in the door and hurls a dust
Of snow upon you, and your heart stands still,
For in the passionate depths of her dark eye
Unutterable woe and terror lie.

IN MEMORIAM

Marjorie Pickthall

I

Cometh the night? Not yet, not yet,
Caught in the young day's fiery net,
The morning star on heaven's blue hill
Thrones its diminished splendour still.
To greet the wild embrace of light
In the hushed wood the violet shy
Opens an azure-shadowed eye;
All things refute that dreadful cry,
"Cometh the night."

II


Cometh the night ere blaze of noon?
Dear God, it is too soon, too soon,
The moon's pale plumes are never spread
O'er that dark road down which the dead
Regretful wing unpitied flight.
Silent the singer but the song
Remains for men to cherish long;
Words of immortal beauty, strong
As God who ruleth night.

III

Laus Deo, earth, though old,
Still hath graces manifold;
At youthful May's white breasts each year
Nursling buds of life appear,
Fathered by uncompassionate night.
God formeth certain souls to bring
Beauty to men, who grossly cling,
Wormlike to earth; Laus Deo, sing
All ye who love the light.

IV

Cometh the night and welcome too,
Perchance. to one who never drew
 Delight from day's too bold regard.
 Feet which the thorns of life have scarred
Are not unthankful for surcease
 Of wandering in futile quest
 Of beauty, fleet and unpossessed,
 Save for a moment; night is best,
 Night and peace.



The Cardinal's Hat

So young Tittoni is a cardinal?
The black-eyed rogue; well, he has got a head
Can well support the dignity of the hat.
Old blood, brains and a goodly store of gold,
A laugh, refreshing as a fountain heard
Amid green leaves in dog-days, temper bland
And courtly manners are convenient steps
By which men climb the treacherous slopes of fame.
Let no one grudge the cardinal his luck.
His Holiness has still an eye for men
And, spite of all his eighty years, can tell
By coins clink whether it is gold or not.
I too might now have been a cardinal.
Wouldst hear the story? It was years ago.
My master, Lord Archbishop once, of Nice,
A member of the Sacred College too;
In Abraham's bosom now these twenty years,
Had left his books and sunny orange groves
At Emperor Manuel's call, to undertake
A journey of a thousand miles or so,
Over vile roads, bleak mountains, stormy seas,
To old Ferrara, here in Italy.
His Holiness, Eugenius the fourth,
Damned by one council, thought to plague his foes
And add a fine new lustre to his name
By healing the old wound in the Church's side;
Make East and West one family again
As Christian brothers should be.
At Ferrara first we met, at Florence next,
Wasted six precious months with such result
As you might guess when rival churchmen meet;
A choleric, long-winded controversy,



One moment vowing points of weight were light
As thistle-down compared with unity;
The next, like angry bulls placed front to front,
Bellowing barbarous Latin and worse Greek
To prove a taper should be here not there,
A gown curtailed two inches more or less,
And now you make a bow and now you don't.
Of course the upshot of the matter is
That East is East, Sir, still, as West is West,
And each one reads into poor Holy-Writ
Just what his natural viewpoint lets him see.
But the immediate end was not so wise.
One day the rivals, in a kissing mood,
Agreed, for sake of unity, to patch
The Church's wound, forget the difference
In their beliefs and all are one again.
You might as well try to forget your nose
When raw November sets it on the sneeze.
Is it not strange how one poor little word,
Just eight small letters, rips the Church in twain,
As one might tear a piece of cloth across,
And where there was a goodly web before,
Like our Lord's garment, one, without a seam,
We now have two, here Greek, there Catholic?
But to return, good Pope Eugenius,
A wise old man who knew that wounds will heal
Quicker if salved with some emolient,
Opened his chests, untied his money bags
And scattered golden reasons here and there,
With certain honours men prize more than gold.
Two purple hats took wings about that time
And one of them, propelled by Fortune's imp,
Came floating down on good Bessarion's head,
That's master mine, Archbishop once of Nice.



So while his friends recrossed those villainous seas
To the poor East he sunned himself at Rome,
A skilful mason, fit to keep an eye
On mother Church's wall of unity,
New-built and green, lest bitter winds of doubt
Should crack cement ere it had time to dry.
As years went by a Pope, 't was not the last,
Went to his rest and here the conclave met,
Some sixty princes of good mother Church,
Bald-headed, eagle-beaked and keen of eye,
With keener brains by life made weather-wise,
Who knew the signs of an approaching storm
And saw fair weather ere the sky was clear,
Gathered to choose a pilot. Heigh, ho, hum.
Excuse me, an old baby who must yawn.
The balloting proceeded in due course,
Till certain old poll parrots, beak to beak,
Whispered a well-known name most audibly.
'Tis strange what virtue lies in whispering
When people's ears are cocked to catch a hint.
Then by and by, adown the corridors,
Through every keyhole came a murmur low
That presently took form in words, as thus.
"He's Greek and therefore should be neutral,
Will favor neither Italy nor France.
A scholar too, he rolls old Homer's lines
Melodious as some great minster bell:
Has reputation fair for sanctity,
Knows courts, the world and men and books and art,
Can tell you Venus has a proper leg,
That Spanish wines have got a rare bouquet
And peaches ripen best against a wall,
Red brick, on south side of the Aventine."
That precious conclave was just three days old,



When on the fourth, about the hour of noon,
The hour when dogs and babies take a nap
And youngsters swimming by the Milvian bridge
Hear the sharp buzz of locusts in the trees,
My master had retired as was his wont
To a cool loggia, facing toward the north,
To cull from out the Gospel of Saint John
Some of those meaty texts of rhythmic Greek
Good scholars love to quote at sermon time.
Now I, less full of Greek than good red meat,
Sat dozing as you found me here today.
Sudden there came a rap. "Who's there?" cried I.
A voice cried, "Open," and I answered straight.
"My master, Sir, is busy at his book;
He charged me not to let him be disturbed.
Go and come back again an hour from now."
Fancy the scene on tother side that door
When my rude answer through the keyhole came:
The lengthening nose, raised eyebrows, flushing cheeks
Of three most haughty, noble cardinals,
Grimaldi, Fieschi, Guido Annabaldi,
Princes in their own right before the Church
Gave them the purple hat. "What impudence,"
Cried Annabaldi in a rasping voice.
"Open this door without delay and go
Tell the Lord Cardinal Bessarion
That we must see him upon business straight.
Hurry or you may find my foot impelled
Against your rump, you saucy underling."
Some perverse devil urged me not to ope
The door and ope I did not, bade them wait,
Cool heels in cloister then come back again,
Like school boys sent to con their horn-books well
While master's busy.

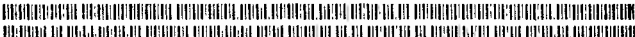
And so their eminences in a huff
Turned rump to door, picked up their velvet trains,
Returned the way they came with nose in air
And eloquent shrug of shoulders to inform
Their brethren what the saucy Greek had said.
The fruit of my bad manners was, of course,
A French Pope and my master left to cool
His heels in the ante-chamber. Yes, he lost
The triple crown and I a purple hat,
Conclusive proof, Sir, that politeness pays.
So, should you ever hear a rap at door,
Open, it may be Opportunity.
Her fickle ladyship will ne'er call twice
Profit by my mistake. And yet I live,
Live just as happy in my cottage here,
With my warm bit of garden, facing south,
As if I were a cardinal indeed.
Wine tastes as good to me as to the Pope,
Nor can his Holiness enjoy a joke
More keenly or sleep sounder than I do.
My lord Bessarion's dead these twenty years,
God give him rest, he was a kind old man;
I served him from my boyhood, I should know.
Ho hum, poor Nicholas, that's my name, must soon
Follow my good old master to the grave.
I'll sleep as snug as he does, never fear,
Or any Pope that sat on Peter's throne.
What's fame? A chilly whisper in the night,
When house is dark and everyone's asleep.

*The Daughter of Jairus before
the Sanhedrin*

You learned Rabbis ask me what I know
Touching my resurrection from the dead?
Well, I can hardly tell, words fail me here.
The thing is strange, thus much I know, I died,
And you, yourselves can see I am alive
While I do know I never felt so well.
My step seems lighter than it used to be,
My lips more red. I scarcely can explain
Just how I feel,—like a young bird, I think,
When first it finds that wings were given to aid
The body, earth-bound else, to soar above
The fields, the very clouds, and wander free
Through the warm, sunlit wash of golden air,
Buoyant and joyous. I have often heard
How great Elisha raised a young child once.
Perhaps the mighty Rabbi who raised me
Was great Elisha's self. What say you, Sirs?
Enough for me, I died and am alive,
A little girl who numbers just twelve years,
One who has not done playing with her dolls,
Still cries o' nights when left alone i' the dark,
Has fancies which she cannot put in words,
And likes to cuddle close to mother's breast,
Listen to fairy tales and gather flowers.
I do not know your law, just one crude fact,
The Rabbi gave me life: I love him well.
You who are men, old, wise and reverend,
Must say who the great Rabbi is, and how
He did the things: the fact's enough for me.
How did I come to die? am I a leech?
I only know the weather was too hot.

One moment my poor body felt like flame
When the hand touches it, the next a chill
Shook me as cold winds shake the withered reeds
Along the stream's dry bed in winter time.
Three days I tossed and moaned in agony,
Nor found I in my playthings joy at all.
Then the ripe melon's cool, sweet, crimson pulp,
I love in health, grew bitter to my taste.
I cried for naught save water, water, yes,
Cold water for my lips were hot and dry.
Then at the last the heat grew less intense,
I felt so tired I could not keep awake,
Saw through a mist the faces round my bed,
Drew one hand, thus, across my eyes to clear
The mist away, so slept. You say I died.
My sleep in health was dreamless. Were they dreams
That brought familiar things before my sight,
In that strange country, O so wonderful,
Where were no shadows, only light and calm?
I felt no pain, only a little tired.
If dream it were, I dreamed my sister came—
You know our Rachel, she who died last June,
My tall, fair sister with the soft, fawn eyes,
Lips like pomegranate pulp, rich, ripe and red
And thick black tresses that I loved to braid.
I saw her plain as now I see this hall,
Your faces, that tall soldier over there,
Or any other object; and I'm sure
I felt her soft, warm arms about my waist
And heard her voice. You know our Rachel's voice
Was softer than a dove's coo, when the white
Dawn breaks, and sleepy children hear the sound,
The liquid murmur, with still drowsy ears.
What happened next? well, Sirs, I've often heard

My mother's voice coming, or so it seemed,
From far away, say, "Zillah, my beloved,
'Tis time to wake, get up, my baby, come,
Soft, rosy dawn light has awaked the rose.
Up, I have golden honey, new-drawn milk
And baby girls must breakfast ere go play."
Just so it seemed that in that sleep, called death,
Above my sister's voice I heard a voice
Saying, "Talitha Cumi," and a hand,
Tender and warm as mother's took my own.
Then, as o' mornings I awake from sleep,
Sit up in bed and rub my eyes and yawn,
So, in a moment, I sat bolt upright,
Saw mother, father, three strange bearded men,
And Him the great tall Rabbi with the eyes
That seemed to talk as Rachel's eyes did once.
He smiled at me, I felt that all was well.
He's bad? I only know that He is fair,
With hair and beard one ruddy flame of gold.
Well, once again He spake, said, "Give her meat."
Then smiled at me again, and left the room.
And now I've told my story, all I think
That I can tell or you would care to hear.
You're wise, my seniors, and I have respect
For all of you, your learning and your place
And yet I'll not believe the Rabbi's bad.
If He's not God, indeed, He's God to me.



Duality

Night, and the glory of the stars above me
And all the world away.
Clouds and the surging power of winds around me
And I as free as they.
Free, on the bold brow of this lonely mountain,
Moonlight around me thrown;
Far above earth and all its fierce contentions
And, save for God, alone.

Alone with things that know not mortal sorrow
And would not care if we
Were hurled, like light, through interstellar spaces,
Throughout eternity.
Hark! faint, far off, I catch the sound of singing,
The warm breath of the loam;
And see beneath me in the shadowy valley
The light that calls me home.

Ah, man the earth-born, needs the warm embraces
And rich delights of earth,
An arm of flesh to stay his feet from falling,
Laughter and homely mirth
But when I lay aside this mortal vesture,
Become immortal mind,
Then I, perhaps, may call a star my brother
And the great winds my kind.



Saint Elizabeth

Deep lay the snow on the Thuringian hills,
The bitter wind howled loud;
Beneath the ice slow crept the silent rills,
Wrapped in their icy shroud.

With loaves to feed her poor, a goodly store,
Facing the rabid north wind's stinging breath,
Passed with her vivid smile from door to door
Dark-eyed Elizabeth.

Her youthful lord, returning from the chase,
Met her emerging from a ruined shed,
Some homeless beggar's wretched dwelling-place,
And, with mock sternness, said:

"What precious treasure doth your mantle hold,
Elizabeth, my bride?
Gifts for the poor within its ample fold
I know full well you hide.

"Come, let me see," and, in a playful mood,
Her cloak aside he drew.
No golden alms, no store of dainty food,
Assailed the Landgrave's view.

But a rich shower of blossoms, passing fair,
Sweeter than those which Dante in his dream
Saw wave serenely in the tender air
By Lethe's cleansing stream.


Great blood-red roses, bright as those that glow
Against the blaze of Heaven's golden dome;
Deep, fragrant-hearted lilies, white as snow
And pure as wind-blown foam.

"Whence come these flowers?" the startled Landgrave
cried.

"No roses blossom mid our winter gloom."
Bread for God's poor, transformed and glorified,
Bursts into fadeless bloom.

Still doth the memory of the royal saint
Haunt ancient Marburg town.
The memory of her good deeds, sweet, if faint,
Through time's long night floats down.

And still above the green fields, bright with flowers,
From night's dark cave withdrawn,
The traveller sees her gray cathedral towers
Flush in the roseate dawn.



Beyond the Veil

I

There is a world beyond this world of sense,
There is a light owes nothing to the sun;
It falls in splendor on those faery hills
O'er which the wild dreams run.

II

Strange creatures riding on the lightning flash,
Strange faces peering through the veil of time,
Fair faces of the children of the gods,
Who only live in rhyme.

III

Reclining on a bank of new-blown flowers,
Whose swift-expiring breath makes summer sweet,
Lulled by the golden glamor of the noon,
One hears the passing feet

IV

That rustle in the grass or swiftly go
Among the tree tops and along the sand;
But though we hear strange voices in the air,
No words we understand.

V

They speak a language which, to mortal ears,
Is as the language of the bird and bee.
We are too dull to learn that magic tongue,
We are too blind to see.



VI

The faery ships that stem night's cloudy deep,
When reigns the moon in glory, all alone.
Only the young hear, faint and far away,
The horns of elfland blown.

VII

Only the young-old folk who ever keep
The driftwood fire of fancy burning warm,
And catch a gleam of the eternal day
Through life's black autumn storm.

VIII

When, unregretfully, we drop the flesh,
Like an old coat, into the gulf of night;
Ah, we shall hear the faery horns of youth
Hail God's all-conquering light.



The Crusader

I

Sheathed broadsword by his side,
Shield upon his breast,
Battles over long ago,
Lies the knight at rest;
In the land he fought to save
From the Infidel,
Waiteth for the judgment peal,
Sleepeth long and well.

II

Sleepeth well yet hears the crowd
Pass the old church door;
Women's dresses, little feet,
Rustle on the floor.
How I love to think, sometimes,
That the grim lips smile
As a boy's clear treble floats
Sweetly down the aisle.

III

For the Knight was once a boy,
Sang in English choir,
Knew the lure of laughing eyes,
Felt his heart on fire,
When across the dewy fields
Battle trumpets rang,
While his father's ancient towers
Heard the broadsword clang.

IV

Ah, I know the gray dust stirred,
Felt the battle flame,
When adown Jerusalem's streets
England's legions came:
Flash of lance and tossing plume,
Muttered roll of drum;
Now the long crusade is o'er,
Allenby has come.

V

Far away in English lanes
English roses bloom;
Mellow English sunlight falls
On a stately tomb;
But the Knight as quiet sleeps
'Neath Jerusalem's sod;
Calmly, as becomes the brave,
Rest, O knight of God.



Mary

I

Beside a ruined wall I saw her first,
 Bathed in the cool, blue light of early day;
Bold, from its clear, green sheath, above her burst
 A hawthorn spray,
Bowed by a chilly veil of glittering dew,
 That the low wind shook blithely to her feet.
High overhead the hunting swallows flew,
 And her shy glance was sweet,

II

Sweet as the bursting waves of hawthorn foam,
 When insolent young May comes storming in
Around the broken walls of some old home,
 While, clear and thin,
A robin blows his sweet flute in the reeds,
 Sending a challenge o'er the drowsy plain,
Which soon the life-reviving south wind heeds,
 Bringing the wished-for rain.

III

Oft mid the rosy hush of summer eves
 Peasants still see the vivid face of her
Peep through the golden web that sunset weaves
 Of light-born gossamer.
She is no mortal lady of delight,
 But born of fervent faith and love's pure flame,
Oftenest, when children to the listening night
 Breathe Mary's holy name.

Mutation

I

I wandered on the hillside
 Upon a night in June;
I saw the fairies dancing
 Beneath a crescent moon
And heard their merry laughter
 That straight recalled to me
The flower-sweet tunes that linger
 In halls of memory.

II

I wandered by the seaside,
 Where the billows fall;
Above the breaker's thunder
 Rang out the seamew's call;
And as its haunting cadence
 Across the foam was flung,
Returned to me the happy days
 When you and I were young.

III

I wandered by the brookside
 In autumn of the year,
When through the ruddy maples
 The winds of sorrow stir,
The bitter winds that visit us
 When leaf and blossom flee;
Too soon, O friend of springtime,
 They'll breathe on you and me.



Last Post

I

Lo, where a passionate splendor of pure flame
Heralds the days release
From the tumultuous presents stormy claim
Into a boundless peace.

II

Clear as a robin's call through dripping leaves,
After a night of storm,
In silvery tones the plaintive bugle grieves
Above each flag-wrapped form.

III

Silence, O haunting bugle, for no cry
Of grief or pain may bring
One passionate heart throb to the dead who lie,
Deaf to the voice of spring.

IV

The day dies and the little wind of night
Moans mournfully and low
Adown the pathway of the fading light,
The way we all must go.

Fruition

I

"Till Death us part." And why such limitation
To what must boundless and eternal be?
'Or why assign man's beggarly duration
To the best attribute of Deity?

II

For God is love and if man's love be broken,
At times, by paw of the intrusive brute;
Surely he may aspire to hear this spoken
By lips Death rendered mute.

III

"In the old days, when you and I together
Laid each to each a passion-troubled heart,
Came, like a cloud, across our bluest weather.
"Till Death us part."

IV

"But now, beyond relentless Time's dominion,
In this calm place, no chance or change may know,
"Till Death us part," sounds like some old opinion
That moved us long ago.

My Lady

I

She walks amid the noisy crowd
And yet alone she seems,
A dainty creature, shy and proud,
Like maiden seen in dreams:
Her eyes are bright as love's own star,
Brown pools of laughter, deep;
Her thoughts as pure as lilies are
And calm as folded sheep.

II

This is no heathen goddess bold,
Rich-hued as Samian wine,
With sky-blue eyes and hair of gold,
Like ore from India's mine;
She is my lady of delight,
Made for all homey ways,
For sunny rooms by love made bright,
Where childish laughter strays.

III

My love's a casket richly wrought
And full of spices sweet
As ever from the East were brought
By white-winged galleons fleet.
No evil thing may near her dwell
For truth is in her eyes;
In kindly deeds she doth excel,
By perfect love made wise.

IV

No pagan dame with jewelled zone,
Not Venus' self shall e'er
Usurp my lovely lady's throne,
Her crown of glory wear:
She is my lady of delight
Who doth my honour keep,
And all her thoughts as snow are white
And calm as folded sheep.



Rose

Dainty rose on jewelled spray,
Nodding slow at break of day;
Summer hastens fast away,
Dainty rose, you may not stay.
While you may, then, drink the dew,
Dream the sun was made for you.

Note that dust from whence you spring,
Once it too could pleasure bring,
Blithely dance and laugh and sing,
Wave a fan and please a king.
Is she dust alone, my Rose?
Only God who made her knows.

Northern Lights

I saw the deep vault of the autumn night troubled by
restless bands

Of flame that shook like torches in the wind, borne by
immortal hands.

These are not omens, said a voice, that dark portend
some great event;

They are the glory of God's love revealed for man's
encouragement.

*Upon Receiving a Pink Rose from
a Little Girl*

When the colour that brightens my Sylvia's cheek
Has faded for ever and aye;
And gloomy philosophers painfully seek
To shew what is mortal must die.
Not a tear will I shed o'er that beauteous bloom
Which death has concealed with his snows;
For surely a monarch might envy its doom,
To die and return as a rose.

Classic

Don't you wish you were a classic, throned amid the
unread great,

High above the last best-seller, like a monarch in his
state?

This it is to be a classic, Scorn is absent, Malice mute.
Lapped from preface round to index in a fine morocco
suit;

All the critics bow before you, all the little ladies praise,
So you slumber on unnoted on the top shelf all your
days.

Donkeys whom you loathed while living rip you into
ribbons, dead;

Find that you meant this or tother, the reverse of all
you said.

Once a year some pale professor whispers in a student's
ear.

"Have you read immortal Homer? Shakespeare, poet
without peer?"

If that student should be honest he will say,—“Why
no, by gum,

Never knew he was a poet. I shall have to read him,
hm!”

But most students are not honest so they close their
eyes and say,

“Yes, we read him in vacation, 'bout a year ago today.”

Then they link their arms and wander down the street,
superbly cool,

To the little sandy parlour of McGinty, to play pool.

One fat volume will contain your best of thought in
snips and snaps,

Weary editors will cull you from that fruitful field of
scraps.

Meanwhile, underneath the daisies and a sky divinely
blue,

Sleeps a tired, immortal classic. Don't you wish you
were one too??

To an Old Etruscan Lamp

(In the collection at the Winnipeg Industrial Bureau)

Can it be true you've cast an eerie light
On an Etruscan lady's dressing table,
Before Herodotus began to write
Or Romulus to frame Rome's earliest gable?
As you reveal to me the Muse's page
I feel myself grow gray with hoary age.

This modern city, banished by the magic
Of your strange presence, vanishes away;
And I revisit scenes, or gay or tragic,
Crowded with actors of an elder day;
Ere Nordic hosts had forced the gloomy Kyber,
Or Lars Porsena tried to cross the Tiber.

The Homeric heroes still were cracking crowns
And holding many a tiresome, long debate;
While great Achilles chased the Trojan clowns
And stalked young Hector by the Scaen gate,
When you were made to please some dainty lady;
I wonder if her name were Lou or Sadie.

I think I see her now, a red-lipped lass
With dreamy, long-lashed eyes of deepest black,
Cheeks like a dew-washed rosebud and a mass
Of raven hair that, flowing down her back,
Blends with her glossy mantle's purple fold
And gleams beneath a cap of pearl and gold.

Did she use hairpins, ribbons, paint or powder?
Or ever one new, startling fad discover?
Did she eat ice-cream-soda or clam-chowder?
You need not tell me that she had a lover,
A cheerful, stirring, athletic cuss,
Known to his friends as Quintus Didius Muss.

What sort of temple did she say her prayers in?
Had she any brothers, aunts or sisters?
And did she expiate her deeds of sin
By learning ancient texts and nursing blisters?
Did she e'er see a satyr or the Phoenix?
Or lecture upon suffrage or eugenics?

O what a humdrum life she must have led,
No moving-pictures, trains or telephones,
No elevated roaring overhead,
No chocolate bon-bons and no ice-cream cones.
What sort of games did she and sister Lou
Play at in Tusculum when Thebes was new?

What sort of cooking had they in those times?
Did they eat macaroni and spaghetti?
Did love-sick swains discourse their doleful rhymes
At one a.m. or tumble off a jetty?
Did Quint' regale his lady with a tune
Played on a large, unmusical bassoon?

We may not doubt that youngsters then, as now,
Were jolly scamps who loved a merry game,
Or that young Quintus did, in many a row,
Uphold the honor of the household name.
If by this lamp his lady used to dress,
He was a patient chap one must confess.

Sword of Robert Lee

I

Oh, drawn not for glory or vengeance or gain,
What a story its metal enshrines;
And bright as his honour that bears not a stain,
The sword of the hero still shines.

II

Be kind to his memory who loveth the right,
Though blinded his judgment may be;
With a world all in arms it were better to fight,
Than to sacrifice honour, agree.

III

He fought for a principle, call it not base,
Try to see with his eyes if you can;
To err is but human, defeat no disgrace,
If only you've fought like a man.

IV

The bugles are silent, the banners are furled,
The chief and his armies are dust;
But the Knightly example he gave to the world
Will ne'er be forgotten, we trust.

V

Yea, sheathe the old sword, for its battles are o'er,
But let not its lustre grow dim;
A hero hath clothed it with glory of yore,
Keep it bright as the honour of him.

Watchers of the Deep

Cold and black is the Winter night,
The north wind's stinging breath
Lifts the frore foam in lines of white;
Each wave may harbor death.
But grim, majestic, watchful, slow,
Heeding no billow's sweep,
Nor roaring gale, nor hidden foe,
Forth on their deadly quest they go,
The watchers of the deep.

From Rosyth past the Isle of May,
Swift heading south-south-east,
Dreadnoughts and cruisers plow their way
Through waves afroth like yeast.
And, lest a blow at Britain's pride
Be struck by envious foes who creep
Too near, the grim destroyers glide,
A watchful pack on every side,
Fierce bloodhounds of the deep.

The great, grey ships steam silently
From dark to amber dawn,
When, from the blue sheath of the sea,
Day's golden sword is drawn.
The sailor's heart with pride must swell
To see the ensigns leap
Out in long, silken folds to tell
An anxious world that all is well,
For Britain guards the deep.

~~~~~  
If home some day the great, grey fleet,  
    Flame-red with blood should come,  
And dead men laid arow to greet  
    Friends with white lips, and dumb;  
We'll greet them as we greeted Drake  
    Of old at Plymouth Hoe,  
One thought shall all our sorrow slake,  
They died like men for Britain's sake,  
    And fled before no foe.

Britain, thy immemorial home  
    Is on the tameless wave.  
Thy sailor's cradle is the foam,  
    The Sea King's hall his grave.  
Great God of battle, who of old  
    Didst all Thy people keep,  
In Thy strong hand our sailors hold,  
    Thy wings of thunder round them fold,  
Till dawns, at last, that age of gold  
    When peace shall guard the deep.











